

# Negro Year Book

An  
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He devised a machine used as an adjunct in tabulating the statistics from the manufacturer's schedules in a way that displaced a dozen men in a given quantity of work, doing the work economically, speedily and with faultless precision. Mr. Pelham has been granted a patent for his inventions, and the improved efficiency of his devices induced the United States Government to lease them from him, paying him a royalty for their use, in addition to his salary for operating them.

The late Granville T. Woods, of New York, and his brother, Lyates took out some fifty or more patents.

Wood's inventions principally relate to electrical subjects, such as telegraph and telephone instruments, electric railways and general systems of electrical control. Several are on devices for transmitting telegraphic messages between moving trains. According to Patent Office Records, several of Woods' patents have for valuable considerations been assigned to the foremost electrical corporations, such as the General Electric Company, of New York, and the American Bell Telephone Company, of New York. Mr Woods' inventive faculty also worked along other lines. He devised an incubator, a complicated amusement device, a steam boiler furnace and a mechanical brake.

The largest number of patents received on inventions, by a Negro was by Elijah McCoy, of Detroit, Michigan.

McCoy obtained his first patent in July, 1872, and his last one in 1917. During this period of forty years he invented one thing after another and has some fifty-eight patents to his credit. His inventions cover a wide range of subjects, but relate particularly to the lubricating of machinery. He was a pioneer in the art of steadily supplying oil to machinery in intermittent drops from a cup so as to avoid the necessity for stopping the machine to oil it. McCoy's lubricating cup was famous thirty years ago as a necessary equipment for all up-to-date machinery.

John Ernest Matzeliger, born Dutch Guiana, 1852, died, Lynn, Massachusetts, 1889. He is the inventor of the first machine that performed automatically all the operations involved in attaching soles to shoes.

Other machines had previously been made for performing a part of these operations, but Matzeliger's machine was the only one then known to the mechanical world that could simultaneously hold the last in place to receive the leather, move it forward step by step so that other co-acting parts might draw the leather over the heel, properly punch the grip and grip the upper and draw it down over the last, plait the leather properly at the heel and toe, feed the nails to the driving point, hold them in position while being driven, and then discharge the completely soled shoe from the machine, everything being done automatically, and requiring less than a minute to complete a single shoe. This wonderful achievement marked the beginning of a distinct revolution in the art of making shoes by machinery. Matzeliger realized this, and attempted to capitalize it by organizing a stock company to market his invention; but his plans were frustrated through failing health and lack of business experience and shortly thereafter he died. The patent and much of the stock of the company organized by Matzeliger was bought up. The purchase laid the foundation for the organization of the United Shoe Machinery Company the largest and richest corporation of the kind in the world. The United Shoe Machinery Company established at Lynn, Massachusetts, a school, the only one of its kind in the world, where boys are taught exclusively to operate the Matzeliger type of machine. Some years before his death Matzeliger became a member of a white church in Lynn, called the North Congregational Society and bequeathed to this church some of the stock of the Company he had organized. Years afterwards this church became heavily involved in debt, and remembering the stock that had been left by this colored member, found, upon inquiry, that it had become very valuable through the importance of the patent under the management of the large company then controlling it. The church sold the stock and realized from the sale more than enough to pay off the entire debt of the church, amounting to \$10,860.